THE HUMAN TORCH

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THE HUMAN TORCH

JUDGE DRAKE HELD THE LIFE OF TONY SLOAN, NOTORIOUS GANGSTER CHIEF, IN THE PALM OF HIS HAND! IN ORDER TO KEEP HIS TRUST AS A PUBLIC SERVANT, HE MUST PRONOUNCE THE DEATH SENTENCE! HE MADE HIS CHOICE THE HARD WAY! AND THE HUMAN TORCH AND HIS PAL, TORO, BACKED HIM UP, AND SAW HIM THROUGH TO THE END OF . . . . . .

THE SENTENCE: DEATH!

COURT-ROOM IN BOTHAM AS THE JURY-FOREMAN HANDS IN THE VERDICT . .

GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY! HAVE YOU REACHED A VERDICT?

WE HAVE, YOUR HONOR!

THEN READ YOUR VERDICT TO THE COURT!

WE FIND THE DEFENDANT, TONY ALCALI, GUILTY OF THE MURDER!

NO! NO! YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME! I'LL WORK SLOAN . . I'LL RUN THE TOWN! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! YOU CAN'T . .

YOU MUG, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO THE CHAIR! . . YOU'RE GOING TO BURN FOR BURNING ME!

WELL--CUT ME DOWN AND CALL ME SHORTY! I NEVER THOUGHT HE'D DO IT!

ABOUT TIME THE CHIEF CAME UP WITH THAT "ELIMINATE" LOAN-SHARK! I'LL BET THAT'S THE LAST WE'LL HEAR OF HIM! HE'LL BE AS DEAD AS DILLINGER!

THAT ENDS THE TRIAL! THE JURY FOUND ALCALI GUILTY AND SENTENCED HIM TO DEATH IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR! THE DEFENDANT'S ATTORNEY HAS APPEALED THE VERDICT!

WELL, TONY'S STUCK WITH HIM! HE'S GOING TO BURN FOR BEING CLEVER!

THAT SURE WAS A LUCKY BREAK FOR ME, IN A WAY!

IN FACT I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THEY'D TRY TO SPRING TONY!

GOSH! I FORGOT! WE'RE SUPPOSED TO GIVE A DEMONSTRATION OF FLAME POWER THIS EVENING! WE'D BETTER HURRY!

BETTER MAKE USE OF THAT POWER, TORO! WE CAN'T KEEP THOSE WEST POINT LADS WAITING!

AND SOON . .

HOW FAR IS IT, TORCH?

ABOUT THIRTY MILES!

MINUTES LATER . .

HEY! WHEN ARE YOU TORCH AND TORO GOING TO — — WHOOPS! SORRY!

MEANWHILE, IN THE CITY JAIL WHERE TONY BOGAN IS HELD FOR SENTENCE . . .

I CAN'T DO A THING, TONY! IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO BURN!

YOU RAT! WHAT AM I PAYING YOU FOR? YOU — — — BAH! I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS!

HA! HA! I'LL BE LEAVIN', YOU BOYS! HAVE A NICE PARTY!

LEAVES THE GUARD . . .

YOU SHOULDA BEEN AN ACTOR, TONY, WHAT'S UP?

PLENTY! I GOT A PLAN THAT'LL FIX EVERYTHING! DRAKE'S GOT A KID! I WANT YOU TO CONTACT THE BOYS! THEY'RE JUST SOUTH OF HERE IN DOLL'S LASTOWN! GET IT?

. . . AND SO IN A QUIET CORNER OF THE MESS THAT AFTERNOON . . . .

OKAY, LADY! WE'RE TAKIN' THE KID . . .

SHUT UP!

NO! NO! DON'T . . OH!

CRACK!

5 SECONDS LATER . .

HOW DO WE LET DRAKE KNOW WE'VE GOT HIS KID?

TELEPHONE! WE'LL DROP DUKE OFF . . HE CAN MAKE THE CALL AND MEET US AT THE DOCK!

THAT BOAT'S A SMART IDEA! NO ONE WILL THINK OF LOOKING FOR US OUT IN THE BAY!

BACK AT WEST POINT . .

I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT IF I DIDN'T SEE IT!

YES, CAPTAIN! NO, WE DON'T HAVE . .

A MESSAGE FOR THE COACH, SIR!

HMM! THIS IS BAD! FLAG THE TORCH DOWN CAPTAIN!

YES, SIR!

CHIEF BRYAN'S HOLDING THE LINE TORCH! YOU CAN TAKE THE CALL IN THAT BOOTH!

THANKS, COMMANDER!

SECONDS LATER..

YES, I'VE GOT IT, CHIEF! GOSH THAT'S BAD! TORO AND I WILL BE RIGHT DOWN!

TONY SLOAN'S GANG JUST KIDNAPPED JUDGE DRAKE'S BOY! THEY'RE TRYING TO FORCE HIM TO LET TONY OFF WITH A LIGHT SENTENCE! WE'VE GOT TO LOCATE THEM!

WHERE DID IT HAPPEN?

AT THE PLAYGROUND IN CENTRAL PARK! FOUR OF 'EM SLUGGED THE NURSE AND GRABBED THE KID! SHE'S STILL IN THE HOSPITAL! A FEW MINUTES LATER, DRAKE WAS TIPPED OFF BY ONE OF THE GANG AND WARNED WHAT TO DO!

HOW COME THEY DIDN'T HOLD OUT FOR TONY'S FREEDOM?

BECAUSE DRAKE DOESN'T HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO FREE TONY! BUT -- HE CAN GIVE HIM A PAROLE ON TERM INSTEAD OF THE CHAIR!

YOU MEAN DRAKE INTENDS TO REFUSE, AND LET HIS SON DIE?

EXACTLY! BRYAN SAID JUDGE DRAKE REFUSES TO ACCEPT HIS TRUST TO THE PUBLIC! HE'S GOING TO SENTENCE TONY TO THE CHAIR ON THURSDAY! THAT MEANS WE HAVE JUST THREE DAYS TO LOCATE THE BOY!

LATER, CHIEF BRYAN'S OFFICE..

WHEN THE GANG CALLED JUDGE DRAKE AFTER THE SNATCH, WHAT DID THEY TELL HIM?

THAT THEY HAD HIS BOY! AND IF HE WANTED HIM BACK ALIVE, TO DROP TONY'S SENTENCE! IF HE AGREED TO THAT, THEY'D RETURN THE KID!

THEN NO WITNESS OF DRAKE'S EVER CAME OUT! WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE KIDNAP CAR -- AND LINE ON THAT YET?

NO! IF IT'S ALL RIGHT, I'LL ABANDON THIS! I HAVE MEN COVERING THE CITY FOR IT NOW!

HOW WILL THEY KNOW IT'S THE SAME CAR?

FROM THE GANG'S FINGERPRINTS, TOMMY! I'LL BET, THAT EACH OF MY MEN HAVE A SET OF THE BOY'S PRINTS, WHICH WE GOT OFF THE KIDNAP'S CAR! THEY'LL HAVE AS A GUIDE!

WE'LL PAY JUDGE DRAKE A VISIT! I WANT TO EMPHASIZE TO HIM THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT LETTING ANY OF THIS LEAK OUT TO THE PAPERS!

JUDGE DRAKE'S APARTMENT . . .

. . . SO YOU SEE, JUDGE DRAKE, YOU'VE GOT TO STALL THEM! ONCE TONY'S GANG GETS THE DATA YOU'RE GOING TO REFUSE, THEY'LL KILL YOUR BOY!

(SOB) OH, NO! NO!

THERE, THERE, MARY! I'LL DO AS YOU SAY, TORCH! BUT TELL ME . . . IS THERE A CHANCE?

THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE, JUDGE . . . HAVE FAITH!

MY POOR LITTLE BOY! OH, DAN, CAN'T YOU FIGHT YOUR WAY OUT? JUST THIS ONCE! DON'T YOU SEE, THEY'LL KILL HIM IF — — — (SOB)

I'M SORRY, MARY, I CAN'T! IT'S HARD, BUT I CAN'T BETRAY THE TRUST THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY HAVE IN ME!

RING! RING!

IT'S THE PHONE! I'LL GET IT! HELLO! YES? THIS IS THE TORCH . . . .

CHIEF BRIAN TORCH!

YOU FOUND THE CAR? WHERE? . . . CHIEF . . . THAT'S RIGHT! YOU TOO? YES! I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN!

WHERE'D THEY FIND THE CAR?

ON DOCK THIRTY-FOUR AT THE FOOT OF THE FOURTH STREET FERRY! BRING YOUR MEN FOR US THERE!

MOMENTS LATER . . .

IT'S THE CAR, ALL RIGHT! WE GOT PRINTS OF DRAKE'S BOY AND ALL OF THE GANG! FROM THE LOOKS OF A CUT HAWSER DOWN BELOW, THEY LEFT HERE BY BOAT!

HAWSER? THAT MEANS A HEAVY BOAT! PROBABLY A CABIN JOB! LOOK! I'VE GOT A PLAN TO LOCATE THE MOB; BUT I'LL NEED YOUR HELP!

YOU'LL GET IT!

OKAY! IT'S A CINCH THEY RENTED THAT BOAT, AND PROBABLY WITHIN THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS! WITH GAS RATIONING, RENTALS ARE SCARCE, SO IT SHOULDN'T BE HARD TO CHECK!

HOURS LATER, AT HEADQUARTERS, CHIEF BRYAN AND THE DUO GO OVER A SMALL STACK OF REPORTS . . .

I WANT YOUR MEN TO CALL EVERY DRY-DOCK — BOAT DELIVERY — AND WHARF WITHIN TWENTY MILES! GET THE DESCRIPTION OF EVERY BERTH THAT'S RENTED A HEAVY BOAT WITHIN THE LAST WEEK, PLUS THE NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF THE BOAT ITSELF!

RIGHT!

THE LAST REPORT IS IN, TORCH!

GOOD! I THINK WE'VE FOUND THE BOAT -- THE MARY JANE, 23 FOOT CABIN-CRUISER! IT WAS RENTED BY TWO MEN ANSWERING THE DESCRIPTION OF DUKE FRANZ AND FRANKIE KOLE, ONLY THIS MORNING!

THAT MEANS WE GET BUSY, RUFF!

IT DOES! NOW, THEY'RE PROBABLY OUT IN THE BAY! NOT BEING SAILORS, THEY WOULDN'T CHANCE THE OPEN SEA! I SUGGEST WE RING THE BAY WITH PATROL BOATS!

AND THEN?

WHEN TORO AND I HAVE LOCATED THE MARY JANE, WE'LL GET THE BOY OFF! THEN YOUR MEN CAN CLOSE IN -- BUT NOT BEFORE WE SIGNAL THAT HE'S SAFE! NOW TORO, LET'S YOU AND ME GET STARTED!

HE DID FLAMES UP AND OVER THE KELP-SHROUDED CITY . . . .

HOW ARE WE GOING TO LOCATE IT?

THE REPORT GIVES ITS GENERAL LOCATION. LAD! A COUPLE OF FISHERMEN GASSED IT A FEW MILES NORTH OF TROG ISLAND!

. . . AND OUT OVER THE BAY . . .

HOW DO WE GET THE KID AWAY FROM THEM?

I'M BANKING ON THEIR CONFIDENCE THAT JUDGE DRAKE WON'T GO TO THE POLICE!

IF WE CAN APPROACH AND MAKE THEM THINK WE BELIEVE THE FISHERMEN AND ARE OUT SEARCHING FOR A LOST FISHING PARTY, WE MAY BE ABLE TO ATTACK AND THROW THEM OFF GUARD!

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER THE CRUISER SLOWS AS IT NEARS THE SOUTH SHORE OF TROG ISLAND . . . .

THERE'S A CABIN JOB IN THE COVE, TORCH! I SUPPOSE THAT'S IT?

MAYBE! WE'LL GO DOWN AND LOOK IT OVER! AND REMEMBER, TORO, WE'RE LOOKING FOR A LOST FISHING PARTY!

WITHOUT GIVING THEM A CHANCE TO SET THE BOY! THAT SOUNDS OKAY!

LET'S HOPE IF WORST COMES TO WORST THERE'S TROG ISLAND! WE MAY SIGHT THE BOAT SOON!

WHILE ON THE CRUISER A SUCTION HOSE IS FLUNG OVER THE SIDE OF THE BOAT, A HOSE HASTILY ATTACHED TO IT . .

HEY! IT'S TORCH AND TORO! D'YOU SUPPOSE THEY'RE WISE?

NAH! BUT WHATEVER THEY WANT, WE AIN'T GOT SEE? WHEN THEY GET CLOSE ENOUGH, TURN THAT HOSE ON 'EM! THEY GOT FORCE ENOUGH TO DOUSE THEIR FLAMES!

AHOY! THE MARY JANE! WE'RE LOOKING FOR A FISHING PARTY OVERDUE! HAVE YOU SEEN THEM?

WHAT'D YOU SAY? COME CLOSER, I CAN'T HEAR YOU!

THAT'S THEM ALL RIGHT!

I KNOW IT, KID AND OUR PLAN'S WORKING! I SAID WE'RE LOOKING FOR — TORO! DUCK! THEY'VE GOT A HOSE!

THAT'S CLOSE ENOUGH! GIVE IT TO 'EM!

BEFORE THE PAIR CAN TWIST OUT OF THE WAY, A POWERFUL STREAM OF WATER HITS THEM . . . .

I CAN'T GE — (GLUG . . GLUG) TORCH! MY FLAMES!

AND THAT FINISHES THEM!

GREAT! DRAG 'EM IN!

CRACK!

COMING TO THE TWO FOOLS THEMSELVES TIED HAND AND FOOT AND WEIGHTED DOWN WITH THE CRUISER'S ANCHOR . . .

WE'RE NOT WASTIN' ANY TIME WITH THESE MUGS! TOSS 'EM OVER THE SIDE!

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE OR WHY YOU'RE DOING THIS . . . BUT YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH IT!

HA! HA! SEE? I TOLD YOU THEY WEREN'T WISE! WELL, I AIN'T TELLIN' YOU IF YOU WANT TO KNOW ASK THE FISH! HA! HA! OKAY, BOYS!

YOU BELIEVE WHAT HE SAID?

SURE! WHAT COULD THEY GAIN BY LYIN'? DON'T WORRY! DRAKE'LL COME ACROSS AS FOR THEM— THEY'RE DONE FOR!

SPLASH

BUT THE PAIR IS FAR FROM DEAD! HAVING CLUNG ONTO A LARGE PIECE OF RAFT, CAPT'N BLY IS USING IT TO CUT THEIR BONDS . .

LUCKY THEY HOOKED THIS SPOT TO BOUND US! THIS STUFF'LL CUT US FREE IN SECONDS! THEN, LOOK OUT!

A FEW MOMENTS AFTER THE END IS ONLY A BUBBLE TO THE SURFACE.

NOW WHAT? I DIDN'T SEE THE SUB ON DECK!

MUST BE IN THE CABIN! LOOK! THE GANG'S ALL IN THE BOW! I'LL KEEP 'EM BUSY WHILE YOU GET THE BOY! THERE'S A LIFE-BOAT ON DECK! LAUNCH IT AND GET AWAY FROM THE CRUISER!

HURRY, TORO!

HUH? IT'S A GHOST!

GHOST MY EYE! GET THE HOSE— THIS TIME WE'LL DO IT RIGHT!

HELP! HELP!

TORO'LL BE CLEAR SOON.. THEN THESE CROOKS BETTER WATCH OUT!

NO! AS TORO WITH JOPIE DRAKE'S BOY, CLEARS THE CRUISER..

I HOPE YOU ROTTEN BABY-SNATCHERS CAN SWIM! IT'S A LONG WAY TO SHORE!

NO! NO! SAVE US! HELP!

CHIEF BRYAN COMES ON A POLICE PATROL-BOAT...

I WANT MY MOMMY!

HERE'S THE BOY CHIEF! YOU CAN TAKE HIM BACK TO HIS MOTHER!

SURE YOU DO! THANKS TO TORCH AND TORO, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE HER!

THOSE TWO ARE WHAT'S LEFT OF THE TONY SLOAN GANG! SLUGS AND DEPE GOT SORT OF WET PERMA-NENTLY SO!

IT'S NO LOSS, TORCH! GOTHAM CAN GET ALONG WITHOUT 'EM!

A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER, IN THE SAME COURT WHERE THE TONY SLOAN GANG HEARD THEIR JUDGE SPEAK..

..AND DURING THE WEEK OF MAY 3RD, I SENTENCE YOU TO BE ELECTROCUTED AT THE STATE PENITENTIARY, UNTIL YOU ARE DEAD.. AND MAY THE LORD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL!

..AS IT SHOULD BE, IT IS, AMEN!

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THE HUMAN TORCH

A CLEVERLY CONCOCTED CRIME SCHEME / AN INNOCENT WOMAN ENSNARED IN THE CLUTCHES OF RUTHLESS CRIMINALS / A CHALLENGING CASE THIS IS FOR THOSE FEARLESS FLAMING FOES OF EVIL—**TORCH** AND **TORO**, AS THE FAMED TWO MATCH THEIR KEEN WITS AND WEIGHTY BLOWS AGAINST THE DIABOLICAL CUNNING OF MASTER GUNMEN!

IN THE BAFFLING MYSTERY OF THE

PAWNSHOP MURDER!

ONE DAY, IN A SMALL NEW YORK PAWNSHOP ---

MY HUSBAND GAVE ME THIS BRACELET AS AN ANNIVERSARY PRESENT. HE MUSTN'T KNOW I'M PAWNING IT BUT I DO NEED THE MONEY

YOU CAN REDEEM IT IN 30 DAYS

AND WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I'M FROM THE FEDERAL TAX DEPARTMENT. MY CARD--ARE YOU JOE SLATER?

I'LL REDEEM IT VERY SOON. THANK-YOU

YES, THE TAX DEPARTMENT? BUT, WHY-->

THERE SEEMS TO BE AN ERROR IN YOUR TAX REPORT I'LL HAVE TO CHECK YOUR BOOKS. SUPPOSE I COME BACK LATER-- SAY 8 O'CLOCK--

THE DATE IS MADE--AND IS KEPT VIOLENTLY!

THERE, NOW YOU CAN EXAMINE MY BOOKS AND-- OH!

THANKS, SUCKER!

A MINUTE LATER FINDS THAT VALIANT TEAM, TORCH AND TORO, SOARING ON THEIR WAY HOME WHEN---

THAT MAN'S SURE IN A HURRY--WHAT FROM? THAT PAWNSHOP'S CLOSED. LET'S QUESTION HIM

AS THE CRIME-CRUSHING COUPLE MAKES A LANDING--

HOLD ON THERE I WANT--

I'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF 'EM!

2

A BARE SECOND LATER, PUDGY FINGERS WIELD A WEIGHTY WEAPON /

NICE GOING WITH THE CROW-BAR, WEASEL

HOP-IN, SLIP--WE GOT TO BEAT IT-FAST /

IT TAKES ONLY A MINUTE FOR THE STUNNED PAIR TO REVIVE--BUT ONLY A MINUTE FOR THE GANGSTER CAR TO ESCAPE IN THE NIGHT

DID WE MUFF THAT ONE /

TOUGH LUCK WE BETTER LOOK INTO THAT PAWN-SHOP, AND QUICK /

GOSH! HE'S SHOT TO DEATH! AND THE SAFE'S BEEN CLEANED OUT /

M'AMA, FUNNY THING ABOUT THE SAFE. IT WASN'T FORCED--HE MUST'VE OPENED IT VOLUNTARILY FOR THE GUNMAN--WE'RE GOING TO THE POLICE /

SOON AFTER, THE PAIR EXCHANGES REPORTS WITH THE CHIEF OF THE HOMICIDE BUREAU

A FUR SHOP AND JEWELRY STORE LOOTED IN THE SAME WAY-- AND THE OWNERS KILLED THIS IS THE THIRD ONE IN TWO WEEKS / AND NO CLUES /

NEITHER HAVE WE, BUT--

NEXT MORNING, WHILE THE DYNAMIC CRIME-CRUSADING TEAM FOLLOWS ITS MISSION --

PAPER, BOY /

BUY YER PAPER / READ ABOUT THE PAWN-SHOP MURDER /

WE CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF THE GET-AWAY CAR, IF TORO AND I MOVE AROUND WHERE THESE CRIMES WERE COMMITTED, MAYBE OTHER PEOPLE HAVE SEEN THAT CAR TOO -- AND GET A LEAD

GOOD HUNTING /

AND MOMENTS AFTER, A RENDEZVOUS!

THEY DON'T HAVE A CLUE, TRIGGER

IT'S SAFE TO CASH IN ON THE STUFF TONIGHT. SLIP'LL CONTACT THE FENCES -- SAY, WHERE IS SLIP? SLIP!

WHILE IN THE NEXT ROOM, SLIP USES THE TELEPHONE....

SURE, BABY. I'M CRAZY ABOUT YOU -- SO LONG, MITZI -- I'LL BE SEEIN' YOU SOON.

THAT'S WHAT HE THINKS, SLIP!

I TOLD YOU TO DROP MITZI. SHE'S NO GOOD FOR YOU. YOU GOT A JOB TO DO. YOU'RE GOING OUT CASHING THE STUFF TONITE -- AND NO INTERFERENCE.

DON'T WORRY, TRIGGER! I'M BRUSHIN' MITZI OFF.

WATCH YOUR STEP, SLIP --

WE DRAW THE CURTAIN OVER THIS CRIMESTER TRIO -- AND RETURN TO TORCH AND TORO!

WE'VE QUESTIONED DOZENS OF PEOPLE AND NOT A LEAD. LET'S CHECK AGAIN WITH THE POLICE. MAYBE THEY'VE TURNED UP SOMETHING!

AS THE FLAME DUO ENTERS HEADQUARTERS, A VERY FRANTIC WOMAN IS BESEECHING THE POLICE CHIEF!

I'M MRS. ED HOPKINS. I READ OF THE PAWNSHOP ROBBERY. I PAWNED A BRACELET THERE YESTERDAY AND I DON'T WANT MY HUSBAND TO KNOW. IS THERE A CHANCE OF GETTING IT BACK?

SO YOU WERE IN THE PAWNSHOP?

WAS THERE ANYONE ELSE THERE?

ONLY THE TAX MAN AND HE WAS GOING TO INSPECT MR. SLATER'S BOOKS AT 8 O'CLOCK.

TAX MAN? 8 O'CLOCK?

GOOD GOSH! THAT'S JUST THE TIME THE CRIME WAS COMMITTED!

I'LL CHECK WITH THE TAX DEPARTMENT AT ONCE ON WHETHER THEY DID SEND A MAN OVER TO THAT ADDRESS!

THE PHONE CALL BRINGS STARTLING RESULTS!

THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH SLATER'S TAX REPORT THEY DIDN'T SEND ANYONE NOW WE KNOW HOW THE ROBBERY WAS DONE.

THAT'S WHY SLATER OPENED THE SAFE!

OH DEAR

WE MAY NEED YOU AGAIN, MRS HOPKINS WRITE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ON THE BACK OF MY CARD

I HOPE YOU CATCH THAT MURDERER! OF COURSE I DON'T KNOW HOW.

SAY.... I THINK I DO! IT'S A CHANCE, ANY WAY! INSERT A NEWSPAPER AD OFFERING A SUBSTANTIAL REWARD FOR THE RETURN OF YOUR BRACELET NO QUESTIONS ASKED I THINK THIS GANG WILL BITE BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO HELP, MRS HOPKINS

WHATEVER YOU SAY-

TORCH YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING THERE!

IN QUICK TIME...

GOOD! IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!

$500 REWARD FOR RETURN OF SILVER AMETHYST BRACELET 6 STONES - NO QUESTIONS ASKED BRING IT TO ROOM #2 HOTEL MONTROSE — WE'LL HAVE IT IN TONIGHT'S BULLDOG EDITION

THAT EVENING — ROOM #2 AT THE MONTROSE —

HERE'S $500, IN MARKED MONEY PAY OFF IF THE PARTY COMES AND DON'T WORRY WE'LL BE WATCHING

I HOPE IT WORKS I TOLD MY HUSBAND I'M VISITING A SICK FRIEND

AT THE SAME TIME ····IN ANOTHER HOTEL SLIP PAYS A FORBIDDEN VISIT

I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER GET HERE, HONEY--WHERE YOU BEEN?

SEEIN' THE FENCES--CASHIN IN ON THE STUFF FOR THE GANG I AIN'T THROUGH YET.

GOT A LITTLE PRESENT FOR ME? YOU SAID YOU'D GET ME SOMETHING SWELL AND EXPENSIVE?

I AIN'T GOT THE DOUGH, BABY SPLITTING THE TAKE WITH TRIGGER AND WEASEL DON'T LEAVE ME SO MUCH.

THEN YOU'RE A CHUMP TO KEEP ON WITH THEM. YOU DO ALL THE DIRTY WORK -- YOU OUGHT TO GET THE BIGGEST HUNK OF MONEY!

YEH-- I SHOULD--I--- SAY, WHAT'S THIS IN THE PAPER?

DON'T BE A CHUMP. COLLECT THE $500, TURN IN SO TO TRIGGER AND KEEP THE REST. HE WON'T KNOW THE DIF

JUST WHAT I'M GOING TO DO. I'LL GO RIGHT OVER TO THE MONTROSE!

SOUNDS LIKE THE REWARD'S FOR THE BRACELET I GRABBED FROM THE PAWNSHOP. IT'S STILL IN MY POCKET. WOULD'NT GET MORE THAN 50 BUCKS FROM A FENCE--MMMM $500 REWARD--

AS A SWAGGERING SLIP NEARS THE HOTEL, HE HAS A SURPRISE ENCOUNTER!

WEASEL!

YEH! TRIGGER SENT ME WE SAW THE AD ABOUT THE BRACELET THOUGHT YOU MIGHT CROSS US UP!

DON'T WORRY-- I'M PLAYING SQUARE SURE, I'M OUT TO COLLECT THE REWARD BUT I'M TURNING THE $500 OVER TO TRIGGER. I NEVER HAD ANOTHER THOUGHT!

SEE YOU LATER!

BETTER NOT-- BRING BACK THE DOUGH!

SURE, DON'T WORRY!

I'M A SUCKER IF I TAKE ORDERS FROM THEM ANY MORE-- NOT FOR ME!

THE NEXT MINUTE, THE CRAFTY GUNMAN MOVES INTO THE LOBBY WHERE KEEN EYES WATCH

TORCH--THAT'S THE MAN WE SAW RUNNING OUT OF THE PAWNSHOP!

THAT'S OUR MAN. WE'LL LET HIM GO UP, COLLECT THE REWARD AND FOLLOW HIM OUT!

IN THAT WAY HE'LL LEAD US TO THE GANG HE'S WORKING FOR--- MMMM--FUNNY--HE'S HEADED FOR A PHONE BOOTH--I FIGURED HE'D GO RIGHT UP TO BIZ

STEPPING INTO THE PHONE BOOTH, SLIP MAKES A CALL

MITZI. I'M QUITTIN' THE GANG. MEET ME AT THE OLD PLACE. I'M GOING UP TO COLLECT THE DOUGH NOW.

WAIT, SLIP IT MAY BE A TRAP! PLAY SAFE. MAKE THEM MEET YOU SOMEWHERE ELSE!

AND THEN-

ANOTHER NICKEL CLINKS INTO THE COIN BOX AND SLIP MAKES A SECOND CALL--

HELLO... YOU THE PARTY WHO'S OFFERING THE REWARD? YEH--I GOT THE BRACELET MEET ME AT--

--AT 2037 WEST LANE AVENUE IN HALF AN HOUR AND COME ALONE!

I WILL. I'M SO VERY ANXIOUS TO RECOVER THE BRACELET IT HAS SUCH SENTIMENTAL VALUE FOR ME.

AT LAST I'M TO GET THE BRACELET I'LL GO RIGHT DOWN STAIRS AND TELL TORCH AND TORO I'M SURE THEY'LL WANT TO FOLLOW ME THERE!

MEMO

MEANWHILE...

HE'S LEAVING ALREADY SOMETHING HAS GONE WRONG WITH OUR PLAN

COME ON, LAD, WE'LL FOLLOW HIM.

THE SLIPPERY SLIP SPRINTS DOWN AN ALLEY, WHERE

AST

HENRY, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO THE LODGE TONIGHT?

YES, I AM!

EMMA, PUT THOSE DISHES DOWN!

WHY DID I EVER MARRY YOU?

THERE HE GOES, TORCH!

AS THE QUARRELING COUPLE HURLS HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS--

TORO!

TO THROW THINGS AT ME--HEY!

A MOMENT'S PAUSE OVER HIS COMPANION--AND WHEN TORCH LOOKS ABOUT AGAIN--

I'M ALL RIGHT. WHERE'S SLIP?

HE GOT AWAY! WE'LL LOOK ABOUT --

AT THE SAME TIME, ELSEWHERE--

I DIDN'T SEE TORCH AND TORO IN THE LOBBY BUT THEY MUST HAVE BEEN THERE. THEY MUST BE FOLLOWING ME. OF COURSE.

SO, UNAWARE OF HER LACK OF REINFORCEMENTS, MRS. HOPKINS DRIVES AWAY TO KEEP A RENDEZVOUS WITH A RUTHLESS GUNMAN --- WHILE TORCH AND TORO, HAVING SEARCHED IN VAIN FOR THE MAN WHO GAVE THEM THE SLIP,

RETURN TO ROOM 82!

TORCH AND TORO RUN INTO THE ROOM.

MRS. HOPKINS! I GOT A HUNCH SHE'S BEEN LURED AWAY!

WHAT A MESS! NOW HOW'LL WE FIND HER?

A FRANTIC FEVERISH SEARCH FOLLOWS --- AND ---

NOTHING HERE. SHE DIDN'T LEAVE ANY MESSAGE FOR US.

WE'VE GOT TO FIND SOMETHING

MINUTES LATER, MRS. HOPKINS ARRIVES AT THE WEST LANE ADDRESS.

THIS IS THE PLACE. MY, WHAT A DESERTED SECTION. BUT OF COURSE I MUSTN'T BE FRIGHTENED. I ONLY NEED TO BUY BACK MY BRACELET. I'M SURE TORCH AND TORO ARE FOLLOWING ME TO DO THE REST!

AND INSIDE THE HOUSE

JUST IN TIME FOR THE PAY-OFF...

SHE'S COMING! WE GOT HERE JUST IN TIME!

SOON THE TRANSACTION GET'S UNDERWAY...

IS THIS YOUR BRACELET, LADY?

YES, THAT'S IT!

IT'S ALL YOURS AGAIN FOR THE $500. LET'S HAVE THE DOUGH!

I HAVE THE MONEY RIGHT HERE.

COME ON, LADY. MAKE IT SNAPPY.

THEY'RE CRIMINALS ALL RIGHT—I WONDER HOW SOON TORCH AND TORO WILL COME IN.

HERE

AT THE SAME TIME A WHITE CARD DROPS ONTO THE FLOOR

LIKE A FLASH, MITZI PICKS IT UP --

LOOK, SLIP! DO YOU SEE WHAT IT SAYS?

DON'T WORRY—I'M LOOKING!

SO YOU'RE FROM THE POLICE!

NO—THAT IS— OH DEAR, IT'S THE CARD I WAS GIVEN TO WRITE MY NAME AND ADDRESS ON. I FORGOT TO RETURN IT

YOU'RE GOING TO FORGET EVERYTHING, LADY!

YEH, BECAUSE I'M GOING TO DO AWAY WITH YOU!

NO! NO! TORCH! TORO!

WHAT'D YOU MEAN BY CALLING THEM?

BUT ANOTHER TRIGGER SUDDENLY ACTS!

BANG

HA,HA, YOU ARE WASTIN' YOUR BREATH! OH ....

YOU'VE KILLED HIM!

THAT'S WHAT THE DOUBLE-CROSSER GETS. I HAD AN IDEA HE'D TRY A FAST ONE AND GO FOR HIS HIDEOUT!

I'M GOING—

SHUT UP, MITZI!

OH, FENOS! MURDERERS! ALL OF YOU!

QUIET! YOU'RE GOING OUT NEXT—

—WITH A BULLET! FIRST YOU—THEN —MITZI —

CORRECTION! YOU'RE NEXT—

TORCH!

ON THE LIST!

I'M SO THANKFUL YOU'VE COME!

WE ALMOST DIDN'T.

OH OH, I'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE!

THE NEXT MINUTE...

DON'T LEAVE US. THE POLICE WILL WANT TO MEET YOU, TOO!

THEY WON'T MEET ME! MY BULLET-PROOF VEST SOFTENED UP THE BLOW, AND NOW...

SUDDENLY...

STAY WHERE YOU ARE, ALL OF YOU! OR I'LL KILL THE KID! I'M GETTING OUT!

YOU WIN...

--AND YOU LOSE, BECAUSE YOU ARE STEPPING INTO THE ARMS OF THE POLICE, RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

LATER, AT THE POLICE STATION--

GET MOVING!

THAT'S THAT. TRIGGER AND WEASEL CONFESSED TO STAGING THE ROBBERIES--AND MITZI IS ON OUR WANTED LIST FOR AN OLD JOB

I GOT THE BRACELET IT'S GOOD OF YOU TO KEEP THAT PART OUT OF THE PAPERS. MY HUSBAND WILL NEVER KNOW--

TORCH, IF YOU DIDN'T FOLLOW ME, HOW DID YOU FIND THE WEST LANE HOUSE?

YES--HOW DID YOU?

IN LOOKING ABOUT MRS. HOPKINS' ROOM, I FOUND A PAD OF PAPER. MRS. HOPKINS HAD WRITTEN AN ADDRESS ON THE TOP SHEET, BUT THE --

SHARP PENCIL CARRIED ITS IMPRESSION ON TO THE SECOND SHEET -- AND WITH LUCK, WE GOT TO THE HIDEOUT IN TIME.

BOY! IF I ONLY HAD YOU TWO IN MY OFFICE!

THE END!

SHOWDOWN

THE little Wisteria town sat in the hollow oval of dry and dusty land known as Last Man's Gulch. Here came the adventurers from miles around, men who fled the past, and those who sought the future hidden in the arid plains to the west.

In the rude shack that served as the barber shop, general store, and town meeting hall, Windy Jackson was holding forth.

"So he drew on me," Windy said. "He drew like a snake, and his gun was out of its holster 'fore I could drop mine to my hip. It shore was a right spec."

"Can't imagine a man in any tighter spec," drawled one of his listeners. "Least'n he was dead."

There was a ripple of laughter. Most of Windy Jackson's audience knew his type well. Windy was a man who did most of his fighting with his mouth. And those hardbitten men, whose daily diet was danger, had nothing but faintly tolerant amusement for a windbag.

"I dropped behind a table as he fired," Windy went on. "The first bullet parted my hair down the middle. He never did get to fire a second shot. Just spun around and fell on his face."

"Mebbe he was feeling tired," interrupted a sceptical listener.

At this moment, the door to the shop swung open. A dusty man stood there.

"The stage to Quorrasburg," he gasped. "It's been held up. They killed the driver. Took a shot at me too and left me for dead in the road."

"That stage was carrying twenty thousand dollars in gold dust. Did you get a look at 'em, Ed?"

"I saw him, all right," Ed managed to say. "I couldn't forget that face. The man who robbed the stagecoach was Frankie Terriss."

The men were silent. All except Windy Jackson.

"Well," he said, "aren't you 'gonna get up a posse to run him down?"

"A right good idea, stranger," interjected a tall, greying man who wore the five-pointed sheriff's star on his leathern jacket. "I'm askin' for volunteers."

No one moved. There was just a shuffling of feet.

"It's not that we're scared," explained a wizened little resident of a man. "But we ain't forgot what happened to the last posse that went out after Frankie Terriss. They found four of their bodies at different places on the road. Three others of 'em ain't even been found yet."

"I'll go, sheriff," said a red-faced, broad built man stepping forward from the crowd. "I don't figger on livin' forever nohow. Might as well die now as later."

At last four men besides the sheriff were gathered. Then someone noted a missing face. After a moment they discovered Windy Jackson. He was already outside on the street, headed toward his pinto waiting at the hitching rack.

"Goin' somewhere, Windy?"

"I was, uh, just gettin' an early start. What've you, uh, fellers been waitin' for?" Windy's lean face had turned a pasty shade of green. The hand hooked in his cartridge belt trembled ever so slightly, but he made a brave show of nonchalance.

On the outskirts of town, the posse came to a fork in the road.

"If I know Terriss," the sheriff said, "He'll head for River Gap."

"Best hidin' place in the whole country," observed the red-faced man. "And it wouldn't be the first time he's hid out there after a shootin'. I'll bet my last peso that's where we'll find him."

Windy Jackson had been curiously quiet for a man with such oratorical gifts. Now he spoke.

"Tell you what I'll do," he said. "You men take the River Gap Road, and I'll ride out the other fork. That way we'll have Terriss covered two ways."

"Seems to me," someone drawled, "You've figured out a mighty handy way to avoid meetin' up with Terriss."

"Just plain common sense, that's all," Windy muttered, and pulling on the reins, he started down the fork at a fast canter.

Night was falling swiftly. Shadows crept up the length of the winding road. The moving masses of tumbleweed took on strangely suggestive and somehow terrifying shapes. Windy Jackson's horse gave a frightened whinny. Windy could have neighed back in terrified sympathy.

When, after an hour's ride, Windy Jackson

discovered that he had somehow wandered off the main road, he did not waste any time in reaching a decision.

He dismounted from the pinto, took his saddle roll and stretched out on a soft stretch of sand beneath an embankment. Here he was going to spend the night, in peace and quiet. Let those other fools look for Frankie Terriss. Windy was not a man who went looking for trouble. No, sir.

Just as Windy was dozing off, the scrape of shod hoofs on the shaly embankment above his head brought him to tense, instant wakefulness. A rider was passing nearby. Suddenly a voice sang out.

"Put yore hands over yore head and keep 'em there."

Windy's hands shot up like semaphores. He waited, trembling, for the sound of the shot that would send a bullet tearing into his back.

The shots came. Four shots, to be exact, so closely spaced they might have been one. Livid flashes of gunfire illumined the sky like lightning. Windy plunged forward on his face and lay there.

So this was what it was like to die, Windy thought. Strange, he felt no pain. He reached out and touched the small of his back. Squinting, he looked at his palm, expecting to see blood. He was wrong. He sat up. There was only one possible explanation. The shots he heard had not been aimed at him.

Then his groping hand closed on a hard, metallic object. He picked it out of the sand where it lay half buried.

The gun was a long barreled, wicked-looking weapon. The mounting was pearl, and on the butt there were eleven deep scratches. Near the safety catch appeared the initials F and T.

"Frankie Terriss," whispered Windy Jackson to himself. The name stuck in his throat. Then the realization hit him. The rider who passed so near his hiding place had been the gunman himself. Had the shots he heard . . . ?

Four shots. That meant there would be dead men lying somewhere on the other side of the embankment. But Windy Jackson did not intend to check on Terriss' marksmanship. He had a sudden craving for human companionship.

Windy Jackson went back much faster than he came. The pinto was snorting with exhaustion when he pulled up before the barber shop in town. A few loungers were already at their accustomed posts.

Windy swung down from the pinto and looped the halter over the hitching rack.

Then he saw the tall, graying man who wore the sheriff's star on his jacket. He was standing in front of the door adjoining the barber shop. A quiet fellow with beady black eyes was beside him. Windy strolled up to them.

"Back so soon?" the sheriff asked, with the hint of a tired smile.

Windy hitched his gun belt higher. He spat a stream of tobacco juice between a crack in the wooden sidewalk.

"I met up with Frankie Terriss," he said. He raised his voice a bit higher, and the men lounging nearby began to drift over.

Windy waited the proper interval for dramatic emphasis. "He drew on me," said Windy. "He drew like a snake, and his gun was out of its holster 'fore I could drop mine to my hip. It shore was a right spot."

"Must've been," said the quiet man standing beside the sheriff. "How'd you get out of it?"

"My first shot knocked the gun out of his hand," Windy explained. "Then my own gun jammed, and the lowdown skunk took to his heels."

"That so?" the quiet man asked. "But I understood that Frankie Terriss carries two guns. What happened to the other one?"

"Guess he didn't have that one with him." Windy took the pearl-handled gun out of his belt and swirled it idly. "But here's the other one! I figured some of you hombres might doubt my word, so I brought it back with me. Guess it's proof enough—there's only one other like it in captivity, eh, sheriff?"

"That's right," said the sheriff, and he drew the mate to the gun from his own holster. "And here it is. We took it off Frankie Terriss when we captured him two hours ago. He got three of us in a gunfight before I brought him in."

"Brought him in?" asked Windy Jackson.

"I think you ought to meet each other," said the Sheriff. He indicated the quiet man by his side. "This here is Frankie Terriss. He's on his way to jail now."

"Howdy," said Terriss.

Windy Jackson didn't answer. With a quiet, sad little sigh, he slumped at the sheriff's feet in a dead faint.

The little Western town still sits in the hollow oval of dry and dusty land known as Last Man's Gulch. Here come adventurers from miles around . . . men of every description. But to this day, no sign has ever been seen of the gentleman known as Windy Jackson.

THE END

HUMAN TORCH

WHEN STULLS A MOVIE SET FICTION TURNS INTO GRIM REALITY AND THE SILVER SCREEN INTO A BACKDROP OF DEATH. WHO AMONG THE SHOW-PEOPLE IS A KILLER? THE LONELY LADY STAR? THE GUNMAN WITH THE PIN-STRIPE SUIT? OR OR... THAT TORRID TEAM OF CRIME-FIGHTERS **TORCH** AND **TORO** SMASHES INTO A MAZE OF CRIME THAT NEARLY BLASTS THEIR LIVES WHILE THEY SEEK TO UNRAVEL THE BAFFLING MYSTERY THAT REVOLVES AROUND

"THE FATAL FIFTH BULLET"

OUR STORY BEGINS WITH...

YOU GOT WHAT'S COMING, SQUEALER! MY NEXT STOPS OVER THE BORDER!

WHAT THE...

YOUR NEXT STOPS JAIL!

LET US GO! YEOWWW!

CUT!

...AND THAT'S FINISH. THANKS, TORCH AND TORO. IT WAS FINE OF YOU TO DONATE YOUR SERVICES FOR THIS MOVIE SHORT.

WE ENJOYED DOING A PICTURE ON THE CRIME-DOESN'T-PAY THEME.

MAKING MOVIES IS SURE INTERESTING, MR MAXWELL.

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MAN?

HOW ABOUT WATCHING US FILM A BIG CLIMB AS I WERE GOING ON LOCATION TO START "GOLDEN DREAMS" STARRING THIS YOUNG LADY NONA TENT WHOM THE STUDIO CHOSE FOR HER FIRST STAR ROLE.

COMPANY! WE LEAVE IN 5 MINUTES FOR BLUE FOREST!

TORCH! LOOK! THE ACTOR JOHN WELLS WHO WAS SHOT! HE'S STILL DOWN!

IT'S A WONDERFUL BREAK FOR ME.

CONGRATULATIONS! WE'LL WATCH FOR A WHILE!

HEH, HEH! THAT SHOT LARRY MARR FIRED WAS FATAL!

BUT THE GUN WAS LOADED WITH BLANKS. FIVE SHOTS I FIRED AND EACH TIME WITH BLANKS! SORRY, BUCK, OUR PROP MAN LOADED IT!

BUCK IS SUMMONED TO THE JUDGE'S SIDE...

THIS GUN SHOWS 5 SHOTS WERE FIRED ALL RIGHT BUT ONLY 4 WERE BLANKS A REAL BULLET WAS SUBSTITUTED FOR THE FIFTH!

I PUT IN 5 BLANKS AND HANDED THE GUN RIGHT TO LARRY MARR. I SAW HIM PUT IT IN HIS COAT POCKET!

THEN YOURS THE ONLY ONE WHO HAD THE CHANCE TO SWITCH BULLETS!

I DON'T! I REMEMBER NOW! BEFORE THE PLAYING BEGAN, I TOOK OUT A LOAF AND LEFT IT HERE IN DRESSING ROOM! RUSH ALONG FOR A FEW MINUTES!

TORCH!

I'M HOMER HARLIN. I ACCIDENTALLY TOOK A PICTURE THAT'S PLENTY IMPORTANT! BEFORE THE PLAYING I TOOK SOME PICTURES AROUND ARES' BUNGALOW, BUT I'M SO NEARSIGHTED AND I'M FLUSTERED MY GLASSES JUST THEN, SO I DON'T REALIZE WHAT I WAS SNAPPING — I JUST DEVELOPED THE FILM AND DOES IT TALK! COME, I'LL SHOW YOU!

AS THE TRIO ENTERS THE LONELY DRESSING-ROOM...

SOMEONE'S HERE!

WHO IS IT? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

DR. ROSE

SAY THE LIGHT ON JUST IN TIME. HEY IT'S RED TERENCE IS CAUGHT RAN ON THE LOT.

HE HAS A LOT TO EXPLAIN TERENCE HAVO OVER THAT PICTURE YOU WERE STEALING!

WHEN IT'S NONA TREAT - TAKING THE GUN OUT OF HARS POCKET!

AND YOU WERE TRY-ING TO PROTECT HER, TERENCE!

I LOVE NONA. I WAS AFRAID SHE WAS... AND WITHOUT THE PHOTO THERE'D BE NO ACTUAL EVIDENCE ON THE POLICE!

ACE MAXWELL NOTIFIED US THERE'D BEEN A MURDER JUST WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING HERE!

VACATION'S - AND A VISIT TO NONA'S BUNGALOW...

WE FOUND A MARRIAGE LICENSE IN YOUR TRUNK - AND A LETTER FROM JOHN WELLS YOU AND TERENCE HERE SECRETLY MAR-RIED AND WELLS WAS BLACK-MAILING YOU ABOUT IT.

HE KNEW MY CONTRACT PROHIBITS MARRIAGE FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS.

IT'S ALL MY FAULT I TALKED NONA IN TO MARRYING ME AGAINST ME. I KILLED WELLS!

GO ON! YOU'RE LYING TO SAVE HER! WE GOT THE EVIDENCE!

BACK ON THE LOT

WE CAN'T STALL UP PRODUCTION! GOLDEN DREAMS WILL START TODAY REGARDLESS. WE'LL SHOOT AROUND THE LEAD ACTRESS UNTIL A NEW ONE IS FOUND.

WE STILL GOING ON IT ON WITH THIS FILM?

WHAT? NO WAY!

AS THE ACTORS FILE INTO THE STATION WAGONS

HOWS ABOUT RIDING IN MY CAR, BOYS?

THANKS BUT WE'LL FLY OVER, AMES. YOU'RE PRETTY LOADED

LET'S GET STARTED. I DON'T WANT TO MISS ANY OF MY TORCH. WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?

SOMETHING ANY OF ME IS MISSING. I CAN PROVE THAT NONA TRENT DIDN'T KILL HERSELF. LAD WERE GOING PLACES!

POLICE HEAD-QUARTERS?

YES, I WANT TO GET MOTHER LOOK AT THAT PICTURE

AT THE POLICE HEADQUARTERS...

JUST AS I THOUGHT- AFTER I LOOKED AT AMES'S COAT AGAIN. THIS PIN-STRIPE IS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT. NOT MUCH BUT ENOUGH TO TELL ME THIS ISN'T AMES' COAT. THE PICTURE WAS RAKED- TO FRAME NONA... WE'RE GOING TO PICK UP HOMER HAWLEY!

AND ONCE AGAIN THE FOG IN THE STABLE AREA

HAWLEY'S THE HAND BEHIND THE RAKED PICTURE, ALL RIGHT... BUT WHAT'S HIS GAME?

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT, THERE'S BLUE FOREST. THE CONSTABLE'S ALREADY HERE.

SCOOPING EARTH, THE TORED TWO - SOME BEET'S ACE MAXWELL AND...

YOU SAY YOU WANT HOMER? HE'S GONE TO HIS BUNGALOW. IT'S THE LAST ONE AT THE EDGE OF THE WOODS. YOU'LL KNOW IT BY ITS YELLOW ROOF!

THANKS! ON OUR WAY, BRO!

THERE'S A LOT SOMA HAVE HOME PEOPLE SURE GET LOTS OF HOUSE GEEKS RANT WITH THEIR PORTABLE BUNGALOWS

HOWEVER HOUSE GEEKS WILL BE LAME WHEN WE SURPRISE 'EM!

BUT IT'S TORCH AND THE WHO GOT A CURSE!

THE FLOOR! IT'S SINKING!

IT'S A PASTE-BOARD LAUNCHPAD WE'VE STEPPED INTO A POOL OF QUICKSAND!

SOMA- IT'S NO USE...

THERE MIGHT BE YOUR FLAME TOUCHED THAT WALL AND DIDN'T BURN IT THOSE WALLS ARE AS BRITTON QUICK, WHILE A FIRE BOMB AROUND THAT ROOM-SURELY I'LL DO THE SAME.

IN FRICTION SECONDS, BOMBS OF FLAME THRITY ENCIRCLE THE SHELF...

NOW WE HAVE TO PULL PULL SOY! LIKE WE NEVER DONE BEFORE!

STRONG HUMANS BEAT THEIR WEAPONS AND FINALLY THE HOUSEGEEKS ARE YIELDS ITS PREY!

WE HAVE MORE THAN JUST HOUSES TO DEAL WITH NOW, ACE HALWELL HAS A LOT TO ANSWER FOR THIS TOO!

IN MAXWELL'S SUMMATION...

A TOAST TO A GOOD DAMN WORK!

LUCKY YOU OVERHEARD THEM SAY HE COULD PROVE WOMEN NOT GUILTY THAT MARKED US TO BAIT HIS TRAP!

BUT YOU BAITED YOUR HOOK!

THEY'RE HERE! WE'RE...

TRAPPED NOW WE'VE WITH THE MARKED, BUT DID YOU KILL JOHN WELLS WITH THAT BULLET SHOT?

HOWIE AND I RAN AN ACTORS' AGENCY. WELLS WAS ONE OF OUR CLIENTS. HE CAUGHT ON THAT WE WERE HOLDING OUT MONEY ON HIM AS WELL AS OTHERS, AND BLACKMAILED US. WE GOT TIRED OF PAYING HIM.

WELLS SURE WENT IN FOR BLACKMAIL-ING BUT WHY FRAME RONA?

ACE'S IDEA. HE WAS CRAZY ABOUT HER BUT SHE DON'T GIVE HIM A TUMBLE. HE WANTED TO GET EVEN.

AS IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE FRAME-UP TOO. RONA'S PAL PAT WOULD GO TO YOUR GIRLFRIEND.

TUT TUT TUT. BOYS DON'T SQUABBLE. NOW DO YOU HAVE THE GUN SHOT HOWIE?

I FOUND SOME OLD RUBS IN THE CUTTING-ROOM. IT SHOWED AN ACTRESS LIFTING A GUN OUT OF A CRIT THAT WAS JUST LIKE MINE. I DUBBED IN A SNAPSHOT OF RONA — WHERE DID I MAKE MY MISTAKE?

BY EVER THINKING YOU COULD GET AWAY WITH CRIME. NEXT STOP THE POLICE!

LATER...

I RECEIVED SO MUCH PUBLICITY FOR MY FILM, THE STUDIO DECIDED TO GIVE ME A BIGGER CONTRACT.

AND THEY WANT YOU TWO BACK FOR ANY OTHER PICTURES SOON!

THAT'LL BE SWELL... IF THEY JUST KEEP THE MURDERS IN THE STORY!

THE END

HUMAN TORCH PUZZLE PAGE

EACH WORD IN THE BOXES BEGIN WITH THE LETTER "O" FILL IN THE EMPTY SPACES AND COMPLETE SEVEN WORDS!
O
O K
O B
O E N
O I E
O T I
OR N L
CAN YOU UNSCRAMBLE THE NAME OF THE MAN WHO STOLE THE LETTERS AND MIXED UP THE WORDS?
IT IS SAID TO BE DANGEROUS TO MEET ANYONE BY CHANCE AS MEAN IS MADE THEM!
RIDDLES
1. WHY IS THE LETTER D LIKE A SAILOR?
2. SPELL ENEMY IN THREE LETTERS!
3. HOW CAN YOU MAKE FIVE LESS BY ADDING TO IT?
ANSWERS! IT FOLLOWS THE SEA! C (SEA)
THERE ARE FIVE GIRLS IN THIS PUZZLE WHO LIVE IN THE SAME BLOCK. DO YOU KNOW WHO THEY ARE?
REDSOLO
OLETRAT
LINARM
NEEDIAL
ABETROAR

SUB-MARINER

THE DESPERATE PLEA OF A FRANTIC GIRL REACHES SUB-MARINER AND A HERO MYSTERY AS DEEP AS ANYTHING IN THE SEA! A FISHING SCHOONER ON WHOSE DECKS STALK TERROR, HORROR, AND DEATH! ▲ THEN FEW COMMANDERING IT—! AGAINST THE MONSTROUS FORCES, SUB-MARINER FEARLESSLY PITS HIMSELF AS HE COMES TO GRIPS WITH THE CASE OF

The DOOMED FISHERMEN

THE PARTICULAR SHIP PACED SUB-MARINER IS BASED ON THE WATERFRONT—

DAILY STAR

TWO SHIPS CARRYING CARGOES OF GOLD BULLION FROM SOUTH AMERICA OVERDUE AT RIO AND PRESUMED LOST IN HURRICANE. STORM IN THAT AREA MAY HAVE CAUSED DELAY.

BUT—NOT FOR LONG—

THAT GIRL! SHE'S JUMPED IN!

AND SOME DOWN! I'VE GOT TO SAVE HER!

WITH REMARKABLE SPEED, SUB-MARINER REACHES THE DROWNING GIRL—

LET ME GO! LET ME DROWN!

STRUGGLING WON'T HELP YOU! YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE!

THE NOTHING TO LIVE FOR NOW THAT JAN-BY PANCE— WHO SOME HE SAILED AWAY IN CAPTAIN STORM'S RISING SCHOONER, THE ULTURE. CAPTAIN STORM BROUGHT ME BACK THIS MESSAGE —BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

THE SHIP HAS VOTE—

Dear Sir, Have made
Discovery of
Island 3 miles
South of Rio
Have put
Ashore
Will be back
for

SMACK

I AIN'T AFRAID OF YOU, SUB MARINER! YOU A PAL FOR THAT MASK OF HORUS YOU'LL DIE!

THINK HE'S A BAD ONE, I DON'T TRUST HIM!

A HALF-HOUR LATER...

HERE'S TROUBLE AHEAD—AND I'M FEELING IT!

WE'RE NEITHER DEAD!

AND ON THE VULTURE ROARS—AND ABOARD BRUNILDA VOICES RISE. THEN—TERROR STRIKES!

SO YOU'RE HIDING FOR YOUR DOUBLE MASKS EH? HAHA! YOU'LL GET THE SHARD SOON ENOUGH! AND THERE'S MORE COMIN'! BLACKDOG! SHARPLEY! SKULLIN! ALL O' YOU! ON DECK!

SUDDENLY...

SHE'S IN ALL A TWIST OF THE MAST! NOT AS WAS SHE WAS ONCE!

AVAST! BLITZ SUB MARINE!

A FURY OF FLYING FISTS FOLLOWS

SIT SON— DOWN THE HATCHET!

BUT SWIFTLY...

WHO'S YOUR RUSH! THE PENGUIN'S GREAT!

THE ROUND-UP IS COMPLETED...

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH JIM POWERS!

POWERS! HE SHOVED OFF ON A SHIP SOY 'ROUND THE WORLD! YOU OH SEE HE'S TO COMMODORE ZUL HER TELL YOU DIFFERENT!

SURE! THAT'S THE TRUTH!

YOU ALL LIE! OH, WELL THEN, YOU BEAUTIES DOWN TO THE HOLD AND LOCK YOU IN. YOU MIGHT SING A DIFFERENT TUNE!

IN THE NATURES DENS, RE-INFESTED DEPTHS...

OH, A PRISON CELL! NIGHTY CONVENIENT STORM WAS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE FOR YOUR FISHERMEN!

BET HE NEVER THOUGHT HED BE TRYING IT OUT HIMSELF!

YOU— YOU'LL RUE THE DAY YOU MET ME!

THE IRON DOOR LOCKS AGAINST THE SHAKE MEN...

OK, BOYS, NOW YOU CAN DO SOME REAL FISHING... I'M GOING TO TAKE A LOOK AROUND STORM'S CABIN!

SEARCH FOR CLUES — TO REVEAL OUT THE SECRET OF THE HERACLES CAPTAIN'S REAL INTENT —

HMM... THE LOG-BOOK OF HIS LAST VOYAGE. PRETTY IRREGULAR WAY OF KEEPING IT. PLENTY OF BAD PSYCHOLOGY, WONDER.

AIN'T NO WAY OUT O' THERE IRON BARS!

I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

Suddenly—

LISTEN! A DAMES VOICE!

IT CAME FROM THE BARREL!

OH! A SPIDER! GET AWAY!

YOU! MARY BLAKE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I—I STOWED AWAY! I THOUGHT I COULD FIND OUT ABOUT JIM. WHERE IS HE?

I NEVER BELIEVED THAT MESSAGE YOU GAVE HE CAPTAIN STORM! IS HE ALIVE? I MUST KNOW...

THAT GIRL—SHE CAN BE OF USE...

JIM STORM STRIKES AT THE YOUNG RUSSIAN ACE. HE CRAFTY KING DEVISES A PLAN FOR ESCAPE...

JIM'S ALIVE AND WELL. I'LL TAKE YOU TO HIM, BUT YOU GOT TO HELP ME GET OUT OF THIS PRISON!

JIM ALIVE! I'LL DO ANYTHING TO YOU. I MUST TELL SUBMARINE!

DON'T BE A FOOL! HE WON'T DO NOTHIN' FOR YOU. ALL HE WANTED WAS CONTROL OF MY SCHOONER. TRUST ME, I KNOW. TELL HIM AND YOU'LL NEVER SEE YOUR JIM AGAIN. I'LL GET IN SURFACE FIRST... HAVE IP OUT WHO!

AT THE SAME TIME ABOARD THE SUBMARINE RELOVE "M" REARING...

MISS PRINGS DOES ALL RIGHT!

I BET A HUNDRED SHE BEAT HIM 100 POUNDS!

TAKE ME TO JIM! NOTHING ELSE MATTERS I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY!

SMART GIRL! THERE'S A FILE IN THE SMALL BOX IN THE DOOR. HER. GET "J.O." IF ROPES THEN I'LL FILE DOWN THE BARS.

SHE DID WHAT?

I'LL BE DARNED!

BOY, LOOK AT THAT ONE!

THAT'S WHAT I CALL STREAMLINED FIGHTING!

HOLD OUT THE BIG NET AND I'LL TORCH HER IN!

BUT...!

SUBMARINER RACES AFTER THE FIEND...

HE RAN IN HERE, IN THE BOILER ROOM — WHEN IT'S HOT...

NOW'S MY CHANCE TO—THE OIL DRUM! HE WON'T HAVE HIS STRENGTH AWAY FROM THE SEA!

A SCANT SECOND LATER, THE HEAVY METAL DRUM HURTLES DOWN...

THE CHUMP FOLLOWED ME DOWN HERE. HE CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT. I'LL FIX HIM UP—AND GET THE IRON BOX!

THE IRON BOX IS AIR-TIGHT, WATERPROOF. HERE, GOTTA CAST IT INTO THE SEA! WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE, BUT NOT A DROP YOU CAN GET AT! YOU'LL DIE— HA-HA!

DYING NO!

IT'S MY FAULT! I CAME FOR A FILE TO SAW HIS PRISON BARS, BUT I SHOULDN'T HAVE RISKED YOUR LIFE! HE KILLED YOU!

S-SUB-MARINER NOT DEAD YET!

SUB-MARINER, UNCONSCIOUS FROM THE SECOND BLOW, IS SEALED INTO HIS WATERY GRAVE. THEN...

A WATERY GRAVE! AND THAT'S THE END OF SUB-MARINER!

IF IT ONLY WORKS —IF IT—

BUT YOU'RE GOIN' TO BE— VERY SOON!

MOMENTS LATER, NAMOR AWAKES—AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA—

WHY DO I HAVE TO COME TO? I'M ONLY GOING TO DROP OFF AGAIN—FOR GOOD—I'M GETTING WEAKER...WEAK...MY HAND...IN EYES...I— I'M SEEING THINGS...

SUBMARINER SLUMPS FOR A SUDDENLY FEELS—

A BLUE...HOW DO I...? THE GIRL...WHEN SHE SAW TO ME —SHE MUST HAVE PUT IT THERE!

SHE DO-ED IT! JUST ENOUGH OF ROSEWATER TO FEEL FULL BLOOD STREAM AGAIN!

IN LESS THAN A MINUTE, UP TO THE SURFACE...

IF JUST I GET FREE OF MY ROPES...I CAN JUST GET ENOUGH REVIVED OUT BEFORE I...HA, WHAT'S THAT?

AFTER I'M BEGINNING TO FEEL MY OLD SELF AGAIN.

HIS GREAT STRENGTH SURGES BACK...

I AM MY OLD SELF! NOW TO FIND THE VILLAGE!

I'LL HEAD FOR THAT SPOT MARKED "FISHING BOAT" IN THE LOG BOOK. SOMETHING TELLS ME STORM'S HAVING A RETURN TRIP THERE— AND NOT FOR FISH!

THE SEA-PRINCE STREAKS THROUGH THE WATER TOO.

THE FUTURE— BRONZE DOMINIONS —A QUEEN HAS TO FIGHT!

A SUNKEN SHIP AND THERE, GLEAMING GOLD! CREEPING CAUTIOUSLY THAT'S ONE OF THE MISSING SHIPS CARRYING GOLD BULLION TO HONDEL.

THE MAYOR FITS THE PUZZLE PIECES TOGETHER THE DIABOLICAL STORY ALOFT...

ALL THOSE MISSING SHIPS ARE DOWN, SOON AS HE'S GET THE GOLD HE'LL BE RID OF THEM AND SO'S TO A HIGH JOB!

"IN LIFE HE DID BEFORE. THE SHIPOWNERS REACT!

OH!

YOU MONSTER! OH, IS DEAD!

SURE, HE AND HIS MEN SUNK THE GOLD SHIPS ON OUR LAST CRUISE—BUT A SPECIAL AKTRACO EXPLOSIVE THE PIRATES HAVE FORCED TO SALVAGE THE FIRST SHIPS GOLD! "HEY, HE BLEW 'EM UP IN THE BAY!

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES! AND THAT GOES FOR DEAD WOMEN!

SHE DONE ALL HER GOOD WHEN SHE SOT US TO FILE!

SHE SURE DO GOOD—WITH THAT RULE!

SUB-MARINER!

APTER SOMETHING YOU'LL NEVER REMEMBER!

BOOM

THE END

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